

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 02981 280528Z
ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2981

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV PGOV PINT ECON EIND LA
SUBJECT: LPDR MOVING TOWARDS A "FULLY SOCIALIST SOCIETY"

REF VIENTIANE 2977

1. A LAO WOMAN WHO ATTENDED HER VILLAGE SEMINAR
DECEMBER 27 TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE PRESIDING ARMY OFFICIAL
ANNOUNCED THAT LAOS WOULD BE A FULLY SOCIALIST
COUNTRY IN 1977. THE OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY EMPHASIZED
THE WORD "DEMOCRATIC" IN THE NAME LAO PEOPLE'S DEMO-
CRATIC REPUBLIC TO MAKE THE POINT THAT 1976 WAS A YEAR
OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION FROM MONARCHY TO COMPLETE
SOCIALISM TO BE ACHIEVED IN 1977. THE OFFICIAL
REPORTEDLY DECLARED THAT IN 1977 ALL WORKERS WOULD BE
STATE EMPLOYEES, ALL PROPERTY WOULD BE STATE OWNED,
AND ALL COMMERCE WOULD BE STATE CONTROLLED.

2. ON DECEMBER 15 A LAO STUDENT WHO ATTENDED A VILLAGE
SEMINAR FIFTEEN KILOMETERS OUTSIDE VIENTIANE TOLD EMBOFF
THAT THE PRESIDING OFFICIAL ANNOUNCED THAT IN EARLY
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1977 ALL COMMERCE WOULD BE CONDUCTED IN STATE STORES.
THE OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE FREE FOOD MARKET
IN VIENTIANE WOULD BE DISBANDED. ACCORDING TO THE
STUDENT, THE SEMINAR OFFICIAL CHARACTERIZED THE PRODUCE
MERCHANTS AS THREE TYPES: THOSE WHO GREEDILY MILKED
THE PUBLIC BY CHARGING HIGH PRICES TO MAKE EXCESSIVE

PROFITS FOR THEMSELVES; THOSE WHO WERE
PLANTED BY THE CAPITALIST IMPERIALIST TO DISRUPT
PURPOSELY THE ECONOMY OF THE NEW REGIME; AND THOSE WHO
OWNED NO LAND TO FARM OR HAD NO OTHER WAY TO MAKE A
LIVING. THE SEMINAR OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY PROMISED THAT
THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROVIDE LAND FOR THE LATTER GROUP
FOR THOSE WOMEN IN THE LATTER GROUP WHO HAD HUSBANDS IN
NORTHERN WORK CAPS, THE OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY SAID
THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SEND THE WOMEN TO JOIN THEIR
HUSBANDS.
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